REMARKS

Status of Case

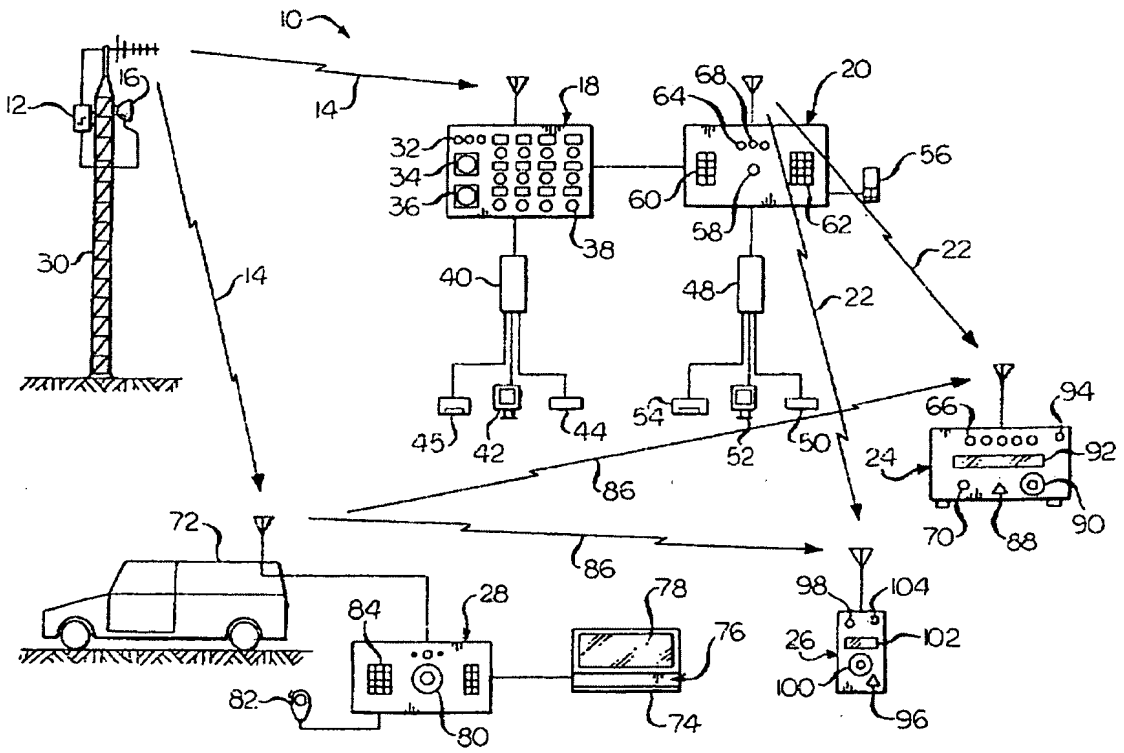
Claims 1-58 are currently pending in this case.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Deeds (U.S. 6,710,715) in view of Sweatt (U.S. 6,633,240). The Office Action acknowledges that the Deeds reference fails to disclose: (1) a warning receiver, separate and distinct from any hazard detector; (2) the warning receiver receiving a warning alert message from a source external to the fire alarm system; (3) the warning receiver providing at least a part of the received warning alert message to the controller; and (4) the controller, in response to the warning alert message, causing at least one notification appliance to notify based at least in part on the received warning alert message.

The Office Action further states that the Sweatt reference discloses a warning receiver 18 that is separate and distinct from any hazard detector 16, with the warning receiver 18 receiving a warning alert from a source external to the fire alarm system (citing fig. 1, col. 2, lines 65-67, and col. 3, lines 1-6). Moreover, the Office Action states that the warning receiver provides at least a part of the received warning alert message to the controller (citing transmitter 20, processor 48, and col. 3, lines 27-35), and that the controller, in response to the warning alert message, causes at least one notification appliance to notify based at least in part on the received warning alert message (citing col. 3, lines 30-67 and col. 5, lines 4-29).

The Sweatt reference discloses an emergency warning system 10 in its sole figure, reproduced below:



As disclosed in the Sweatt reference, the receiver 18 receives warning alerts. Receiver 18 is connected to transmitter 20, used to distribute warning alerts. "Transmitter 20 is connected to a computer processor 48 for the development of written messages for broadcast to desktop receivers 24 and pagers 26 via transmitter 20." Col. 3, lines 32-34. The Sweatt reference teaches the following operator input in order for transmitter to disseminate a message:

> To use transmitter 20, an operator closes the lockout circuit so as to connect keyboard 50 and microphone 56 to transmitter 20 by turning a key in a lock 58 provided for this purpose or by typing the correct combination into a keypad 60. Next, the operator selects the geographic area that he wishes to receive his broadcast by pressing keys on keypad 62 so as to select the frequency of the RF signal generated by transmitter 20. Then, the operator enters into keyboard 50 an appropriate written message and a code corresponding with the level of alert. If desired, the operator can speak into microphone 56 to enter a verbal message into receiver 20. Transmitter 20 transduces the verbal message into an encrypted RF alert signal stream including any written messages and alert codes that are, finally, broadcast by transmitter 20 at a desired frequency.

Col. 3, lines 46-61. Thus, in order for the transmitter 20 to disseminate a message, the operator must close the lockout circuit, select a geographic area to receive the broadcast, enter a written message and code corresponding with the level of alert.

As an initial matter, applicants first wish to thank the Examiner for discussing the present case. Applicants discussed co-pending application 10/914,666 (now U.S. Patent No. 7,145,466)

as at least including limitations (such as the external source being a military agency) as distinguishing over the present references.

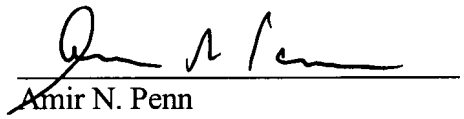
In addition, applicants believe that the Sweatt reference, in combination with the Deeds reference, fails to teach or suggest the claims as currently presented. The Sweatt reference clearly teaches that after a warning alert is received, a human operator must act as the controller to transmit the message. As discussed above, the operator must: (1) close the lockout circuit; (2) select a geographic area to receive the broadcast; and (3) enter a written message and code corresponding with the level of alert. In contrast to this, claim 1 presently recites "the controller, in response to the warning alert message, causing at least one notification appliance to notify based at least in part on the received warning alert message." See also claim 25 ("in direct response to the communicating of the warning alert to the central controller, communicating from the central controller for the fire alarm system to at least one of the fire alarm notification appliance to issue an alert based at least in part on the received warning alert"); claim 48 ("controller means for the fire alarm system receiving the warning alert from the warning detection means and in direct response to receiving the warning alert from the warning detection means, further communicating the warning alert to the notification means via a network"); claim 50 ("the system controller receiving the warning alert from the warning receiver and, in response, sending a command to the visual annunciator to indicate a current alert level in the received warning alert"); and claim 54 ("the system controller providing notification of the warning alert in direct response to detection of the warning alert").

Even if the Deeds and Sweatt references were combined, the controllers in the combination do not perform the same functions as that claimed in claim 1. In particular, the combination of the Deeds and Sweatt references fail to teach a controller that includes multiple functions, including monitoring hazard detectors, communicating with warning receivers, and communicating with notification appliances, leading to a true synergistic effect. Because of this, the combination of the Deeds and Sweatt references fail to teach the fire alarm system as claimed that effectively monitors and disseminates warning alerts. Thus, the claims as currently presented are patentable over the cited references.

SUMMARY

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner grant early allowance of this application. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorneys for the Applicant via telephone if such communication would expedite this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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